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HEARING
ON
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017
AND
OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED
PROGRAMS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS HEARING
ON
**THE MARINE CORPS 2017 OPERATIONS
AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET REQUEST
AND READINESS POSTURE**

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DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted post hearing.]

THE MARINE CORPS 2017 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET REQUEST AND READINESS POSTURE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS,
Washington, DC, Thursday, March 3, 2016.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:50 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Robert J. Wittman (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. WITTMAN. I call to order the House Committee on Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness.

In the interest of time we will dispense with our opening statements, and General Paxton, we will go directly to you. I understand that you will give the opening statements for the panel and then we will proceed into questions unless there is anything additional that you might have.

[The prepared statements of Mr. Wittman and Ms. Bordallo can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 21.]

STATEMENT OF GEN JOHN M. PAXTON, JR., USMC, ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS; LTGEN GLENN M. WALTERS, USMC, DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES, U.S. MARINE CORPS; AND MAJGEN VINCENT A. COGLIANESE, USMC, ASSISTANT DEPUTY COMMANDANT FOR INSTALLATIONS AND LOGISTICS (PLANS), U.S. MARINE CORPS

General PAXTON. No. Thank you, Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the subcommittee again, and General Walters, from our Deputy Commandant for Program and Resources and Major General Coglianese from our Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics.

So it is great to be with the committee again, sir. Thank you.

Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Bordallo, and distinguished members of the Readiness Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today and to report on the readiness of your United States Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps is committed to remaining our Nation's ready force, a force that is truly capable of responding to a crisis anywhere around the globe and at a moment's notice. It has been so for the last 240 years since Captain Samuel Nicholas led his Marines ashore in Nassau on this very day in 1776.

Last year the Congress was kind enough to reiterate the expectations of the 82nd Congress that the Marine Corps continue to serve as our Nation's expeditionary force in readiness, and to be most ready when the Nation is least ready. I thank you for that reaffir-

mation and assure you that your Marine Corps is meeting today and will continue to meet tomorrow your rightly high expectations.

Marines continue to be in demand from all our combatant commanders around the world. They are forward deployed, engaged on land and sea, and ready for crisis response in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific.

Last year Marines conducted air strikes in Iraq, in Syria. They enabled Georgian forces who were operating in Afghanistan, and they conducted lifesaving disaster response operations in Nepal, among many other missions, all while remaining poised to respond at a moment's notice.

Maintaining that "fight tonight" warfighting relevance across our five pillars of readiness, and I believe you all have the handout there that we will refer to during the course of the testimony on the five pillars of readiness. That is what requires a careful balancing, rather.

We must constantly balance between our operational readiness and our institutional readiness, between capability and capacity, between current operations and future operations, between steady state and between surge readiness, as well as between low-end and high-end operations and training.

All of this as we face increasing and varied demands from the COCOMs [combatant commands]. In our challenging fiscal environment, we are struggling to maintain all of those balances.

As the Commandant said in his posture statement earlier this week, the Marine Corps is no longer in a healthy position to generate current readiness and reset all of our equipment while simultaneously sustaining our facilities and modernizing to ensure our future readiness.

We have continued to provide the COCOMs with operationally ready forces, prepared to execute all assigned missions. In some cases these units are only fully trained to just those assigned missions and not to the full spectrum of possible operations.

In addition, this operational readiness is generated at the cost of our wider institutional readiness. This year I must again report that approximately half of our non-deployed units are suffering from some degree of personnel, equipment, or training shortfalls.

We continue to prioritize modernization for our most urgent areas, primarily the replacement of aging aircraft and aging amphibious assault vehicles and we defer other needs.

Our installations continue to be built by areas for today's readiness, putting the hard-earned gains from the past decade and indeed much that the committee and the Congress has helped us with at risk. While our deployed forces continue to provide the capabilities demanded by the COCOMs, our capacity to do so over time and in multiple locations remains strained.

Our deployment-to-dwell time ratio continues to exceed the rate that we consider sustainable in the long term. The strains on our personnel and our equipment are showing in many areas, particularly in aviation, in communications, and in intelligence.

We have already been forced to reduce the capacity available to the COCOMs by reducing the number of aircraft assigned to several of our aviation squadrons, and we expect to continue those reductions throughout 2017.

While we are able to maintain steady-state operations today, to include the ever-expanding Phase Zero operations as we shape theaters and work on theater security cooperation and building partnership capacity, our ability to surge for the crisis of the war fight becomes increasingly challenged.

Though your Marine Corps remains able to meet all the requirements of the defense strategy to conduct high-end operations in a major contingency response, we may not be able to do so with a level of training for all our units or along the timelines that would minimize our costs in damaged equipment and in casualties.

These challenges in providing and balancing provide the context for my message today. Your Marine Corps remains ready to answer the Nation's call, but with no margin for error on multiple missions, in which failure is not an option. To win in today's world, we have to move quickly, we have to move decisively, and we have to move with overwhelming force.

So Chairman, I thank you for the opportunity for all of us to appear before the committee. I ask that you accept the written statement for the record, and prepared to answer your questions, sir.

[The prepared statement of General Paxton can be found in the Appendix on page 23.]

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good. General Paxton, thank you so much. Lieutenant General Walters, Major General Coglianese, thank you so much for joining us today, and thanks so much for your leadership. We understand it is a challenging time with all the threats we see around the world and they change and morph each and every day. And we want to make sure that we are here listening intently to what the Marine Corps' needs are to regenerate and maintain that readiness.

As you spoke of, the readiness recovery effort is based on projecting the timeframes from a foundation of being able to reestablish that readiness. Within that framework, give us your projections about when the Marine Corps will attain on that path, setting the conditions for readiness and then moving from there, when it will attain full-spectrum readiness? And on what percentage do you think on that path you will meet as you get, hopefully, to that full-spectrum readiness?

And then let us know, too, on the way obviously there will be some risk that you will assume, and you spoke about that risk. What core functions will you assume that risk in? Because what we want to make sure is that, you know, we are understanding where that risk might rest and help where we can as we put together this year's NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act].

So if you will do that, and of course you could put that in the context of the fiscal year 2017 Navy budget and what it provides for you as you are setting those conditions for readiness recovery.

General PAXTON. Thank you, Chairman. I understand, and I will also try and defer to my colleagues so you get a little different sense in terms of how the budget was indeed balanced and work with the Department of the Navy and then also where some of the exemplars are for particular sets of equipment, sir.

So if I may, sir, if I understood then there were two questions. The first part of your question was "when."

Mr. WITTMAN. When.

General PAXTON. So we will continue as we have in years past to make sure that the forces that are deployed today are 100 percent trained, 100 percent ready. Within the time we are allotted we can also guarantee that the next-to-deploy forces will be 100 percent trained, 100 percent certified, 100 percent ready.

The issue is for the ones beyond there. And in addition, as you heard me say in the oral statement, sir, that we have several example communities where we have had to go back and in order to reset equipment and generate future readiness, we have had to reduce the density of units that are all deployed.

Perhaps the most stressed community and the examples that I would submit to the subcommittee are aviation. We have several type model series where the aircraft is aging. We continue to fly them a lot, particularly our F-18s and AV-8s on the fixed-wing side. We have gotten rid of the CH-46 community, sir.

But as we brought on the V-22 community we brought them on early. They are two to three times the speed, two to three times the range, two to three times the lift. They have proven themselves in Iraq and Afghanistan, but they are in high demand by the COCOMs.

So we look to train new pilots in the V-22, and we need to bring new aircraft onboard. In addition, we need to bring on the sustainment capability for them.

So right now we only have 14 of our 18 projected V-22 squadrons. We struggle sometimes to get all the parts out there and then to keep the pilots trained.

So the answer to your first question, sir, in terms of when, we do not believe that we are going to have full-spectrum aviation readiness until at least 2020. And that is presuming that the budget continues as it is and that we can align dollars to maintain hours to fly pilots and then the actual people in the pipeline, sir. So that is the answer to your first question, sir.

The second question on pacing items and examples of things where we take risk, several years ago if I was over to testify I would have said that our combat engineers, our EOD [explosive ordnance disposal] capability, some of our unmanned systems were the pacing items for us.

Right now we find that some of the pacing items are actually our intelligence battalions, our radio signals battalions, our intelligence battalions, because those units are now not only forward deployed with our Marine Expeditionary Units [MEUs], but we have generated two Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces [MAGTFs], one that supports AFRICOM [U.S. Africa Command] and one that supports CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command].

Each of those is about 2,200 Marines. In the case of the CENTCOM one, they are operating over about 1,200 to 1,800 miles in six different countries. And they are very busy. Well, in order to make those units work they need a command element that can integrate and plan and deliver air-ground logistics. So it is the intelligence and the communications that go there.

That comes at the expense of the units in the States that provide the people and provide the equipment. So those units are all under a 1:2 dep-to-dwell [deployment to dwell] now, and we watch the tempo. And then when they come back, Chairman, they are also

reach-back capabilities. So units forward may be coming back to them for target analysis, for planning and things like that.

So in terms of the first one, sir, if you don't mind, I would defer to General Walters——

Mr. WITTMAN. Sure.

General PAXTON [continuing]. To see if he has anything else for us.

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes. Yes.

General WALTERS. Sir, you asked what do we take risk in?

Mr. WITTMAN. General Walters, if I can, if I can get you to put your microphone on that would be great. Thanks.

General WALTERS. Sorry, sir. I went silent and I didn't press the button.

Mr. WITTMAN. No problem.

[Laughter.]

General WALTERS. You asked about where we took risk in the 2017 budget. I have some examples for you, basically in three areas. Number one, we couldn't take any risk in end strength. We can't do that, and in fact, we can make an argument that dep-to-dwell is directly related to our end strength and why that might not be sufficient to do what we need to do and meet the timelines that the Assistant Commandant laid out.

We took half of our JLTV [Joint Light Tactical Vehicle] production to balance the 2017 column. We are only at 74 percent in FSRM [Facilities, Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization], and we lost 44 percent of our MILCON [Military Construction]. Our O&M [Operations and Modernization] funds in 2017 are by my estimation somewhere about \$450 million to \$460 million less than what we would call our minimum base to do what we need to do for in 2017. Hopefully that gives you some context of what we are talking about. And a lot of these are reflected in our unfunded priority list that we sent over.

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes. That sounds a lot like to me the term we hear of tiered readiness, which——

General WALTERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WITTMAN [continuing]. Yes.

General WALTERS. We don't do tiered readiness.

Mr. WITTMAN. I know. I know.

General WALTERS. But we have readiness issues——

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes.

General WALTERS [continuing]. As we face fiscal challenges.

Mr. WITTMAN. That is right. Well, and when you have to manage risk you almost end up by default tiering the readiness capability——

General WALTERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. WITTMAN [continuing]. Across the concentric——

General WALTERS. Yes, sir. And you park risk on places that make you suck your teeth when you put the budget together.

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes. Thank you, gentlemen.

I will go down to Ms. Bordallo.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and good morning Generals.

General Paxton, my question is for you. You mentioned that the Marine Corps has struggled to maintain the balance between cur-

rent and future readiness often being required to defer the latter and favor the former. So what steps can Congress take to allow you to budget adequately to meet your readiness requirements?

General PAXTON. Thank you, Ranking Member Bordallo. The Congress has been very generous in terms of working with us to answer specific needs. Given the overall reduction in the total obligational authority, since PB [President's budget] 2012, which is the baseline that we use to measure, the issue for us becomes the challenge of, within the Department of Defense [DOD], future readiness versus current readiness.

So we fully understand and support both the President and the SecDef [Secretary of Defense] and their move for the Third Offset Strategy. And we know that there are things we must do in terms of nuclear capability, cyber capability, space capability, whether it is buying new or replacing old. But those elements are increasingly costly as the threat of adversaries around the world makes great inroads on us.

So invariably, Congresswoman, we think that the future expenses there are often taken at the result of end strength and current capability. So we struggle within that balance to support what we know needs to be done nationally for the defense strategy, but to maintain current bench readiness. So we watch our end strength very carefully, and we also watch our ability to get beyond just today's fight, ma'am.

So the money is there. Other things that pressurize us within the Department of Navy [DON], our shipmates and colleagues in the Navy have been very good. We work with them on aviation capability and on amphibious shipping capability. But the DON budget is pressurized by the *Ohio* replacement program. So there are some big bills and some must-pay bills nationally that continue to pressurize the day-to-day ops [operations] today, ma'am.

Ms. BORDALLO. So I guess what you are saying, General, then is that we have to continue to be innovative, right, and work with what we have?

General PAXTON. Well, ma'am, we certainly understand that, but again, within the budget constraints that we know we have to operate under, at some point we believe that capacity has and depth on the bench has a capability all its own.

Ms. BORDALLO. Good. This is either for you or General Walters. What are the impacts for Marines and their families as well as operational readiness of asking Marines to average closer to a 1:2 deployments rather than your target of 1:3? Whichever one.

General PAXTON. Yes, ma'am, I will start but then I will defer to both my colleagues because General Walters was a commanding general of the 2nd Marine Aviation Wing and they were over in Afghanistan 3 years ago, so he can tell you about that. And General Coglianesse was the commanding general of the 1st Marine Logistics Group out on the West Coast.

So the challenge for us obviously is Marines join to fight. Marines join to travel around the world. So we don't have a problem with first-term Marines. Officer or enlisted, regular, I mean, Active Duty or Reserve Component. They come in to do what Marines do, which is go around the world and fight.

But as we continue the deployment schedule, it sometimes does become onerous. There are education requirements you have for the individual Marine. There is schooling, not only a professional military education within their occupational specialties, but just tactical and technical training as well, and we need to get them out to independent duty. We always need recruiters and drill instructors. So how we manage the career expectations that the institution needs and that the individual expects with a 1:2 dep-to-dwell becomes a challenge.

And then as the force ages, right now the average Marine is just a little over 25 years old, most of the force is on their first term, and 75 percent of the force is forward deployed. So we are very—all the services are busy, but against even that metric we are the youngest and the most forward deployed. So as the force ages it becomes harder.

General.

Ms. BORDALLO. General Walters.

General WALTERS. Yes, thank you, ma'am. The other aspect I would add to the Assistant Commandant's statement, is 1:2, 1:3, what does it really mean? 1:3 gives you time and the time to train. And when you get back from a deployment if you are gone for 6 months and you are going to be back for a year, the first month is basically leave and resetting your equipment. The last 6 months is training if you do it right. And you have got to train for the next deployment.

That doesn't leave you a whole lot of time to reset the force both in equipment and personnel. So if you want to achieve readiness you have to provide time for these Marines to come back, reset themselves and then train themselves back up and be a whole unit. And it is really the people and the equipment together and the training opportunity and time for them to get ready for their next deployment.

Ms. BORDALLO. Yes.

General WALTERS. That is where we see stress. If you provided more time, then they would ready for the full range of military operations one and two. One of the only ways to do that is quit deploying them as much as they are now or having a bigger force. Those are the two levers you can pull to get to a 1:3, which is the optimum. Thank you, ma'am.

Ms. BORDALLO. And did you want to hear from—

General COGLIANESE [continuing]. Covered, m'aam.

Ms. BORDALLO. He said it all. All right. General Walters, the Marine Corps is an important element of the U.S. Asia-Pacific rebalance. And we will be conducting a RIMPAC [Rim of the Pacific] exercise this summer. Now, how do you anticipate that these deployments will build readiness and contribute to regional security policy in the Pacific? General.

General WALTERS. Yes, ma'am. The RIMPAC operation I think we are also using as a vehicle to test out an alternative, as you say, to become more innovative with our organizations. The RIMPAC operation is going to have that component in there. Our posture in the Pacific, as you are well aware, that we are committed to 22,500 Marines west of the dateline. We have a plan for that.

And I think as we proceed down there the fiscal pressures on exercises such as RIMPAC are going to be more and more telling even this year at our current funding level in this fiscal year.

And we are already getting inputs of reducing the scope and scale of a lot of our exercises. RIMPAC is one of those ones that we will try and preserve at its full capability and capacity, ma'am.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you. I have another question here for General Coglianese. We have heard that the construction schedule for the FRF [Futenma Replacement Facility] has been delayed by 2 years, and Congressman, the Chairman, Mr. Wittman and I were just in Okinawa. We heard about this. And it is my hope that the Government of Japan can quickly resolve the remaining issues so that we can get the construction of the FRF and the Okinawa consolidated plan back on schedule.

It is important that we continue to sustain our infrastructure and operational capabilities at Futenma. So to that end, can you please describe some of the key infrastructure investments you intend to make in fiscal year 2017 to ensure Futenma continues to meet the operational requirements of the Marine Corps?

General COGLIANESE. Yes, ma'am, thank you. Thank you for that question. The whole rebalancing has many pieces to it, and as far as Okinawa, as you know, there are political ramifications, legal suits from the local Okinawans, with Japan itself, and the project has been delayed.

But we are, I think, on course still with our DPRI [Defense Policy Review Initiative] plan of moving forces around from Okinawa to Guam. We see it as a delay but not stopping anything we are doing.

Ms. BORDALLO. Yes.

General COGLIANESE. As far as reinvesting in Futenma, we are not planning on doing any major reinvesting in Futenma that I know of because of the alternate site that we are going to.

Ms. BORDALLO. I think what I want to hear is that this will not affect the move to Guam. Our construction and so forth is ongoing, and I think this is what concerns my constituents back home, that there is another delay in this move. So would you say then that is—General Paxton.

General PAXTON. I was going to say, Ranking Member, that we are still on track. I don't think it is delaying. As you know, the three MILCON projects that we had were slid 1 year. We do have a power plant being built, and also the Japanese Government—

Ms. BORDALLO. Is this money from—

General PAXTON [continuing]. Is also doing, as you know, MILCON projects on Guam as we speak. So although it is tied together, we see the plan still as on track for Guam. Just delayed on the MILCON, but, you know, we still think we are going to be IOC [initial operating capacity] and as we predicted.

Ms. BORDALLO. Well, you know, just a few years ago we found out that ultimately Guam was delinked from this Futenma situation, so—

General PAXTON. So, ma'am, Ranking Member, it is a distributed laydown. So when we look at the pieces we realize there are some connections between what happens on Okinawa with the FRF and

up at Henoko area, what happens in Iwakuni, what happens in Guam, what happens in Darwin, and what happens in Hawaii.

So we try to keep all those pieces linked and they have to stay linked in terms of the environmental study, the monies available for MILCON, the ability to train people. The risk that we have is we never want to have a Marine stationed somewhere where he or she is not able to train or not deployable.

But the master plan in terms of movement to Guam and have some of the III MEF [Marine Expeditionary Force] and 3rd MARDIV [Marine Division] units actually relocate from Okinawa to Guam is still an integral piece of the distributed laydown in the Pacific, ma'am.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you. Thank you, General.

And I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Ms. Bordallo.

We will now go to Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, thank you for being here. And I know the last couple of years you have had to manage through the sequester shutdowns, continuing resolutions [CRs]. If you get an appropriation measure, it is at the last minute. And you have got a big job to do, and the fact of the matter is you don't know what your budget is going to be or your appropriation is going to be for next year.

And I appreciate your courtesy, General Paxton, but "thank you" might should be replaced with "thank you, sir, may I have another?" I think you have been treated very unfairly by us in the last several years, especially with all of the things that we expect you to do.

As you know, the Marines you have got distributed ground forces, maintain forward presence in a lot of areas. You are responsible for establishing local relationships and responding rapidly to a tremendous number of things that can happen anywhere in the world.

You are not investing in the unmanned aerial systems, the Group 5s, the MQ-9s that have the extended loiter time. And I just wonder when we talk about the close air support mission, how much additional risk is being taken by not investing in more MQ-9s? And is that an area where we need to do something then to get more of those for you, or additional close air support weapons?

General PAXTON. Thank you, Congressman. I will start and then defer again to General Walters as the wing commander and as the program. But the short answer to your question is absolutely we are taking risk in unmanned aerial systems, regardless of whether it is Group 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. We would like to have more. That is cutting-edge technology. There is much to do in terms of innovation to see how we can integrate an unmanned system with a manned system.

The Commandant was just out on the West Coast last week to take a look at future options for that integration. The challenge for us continues to be the pacing item of our manned systems that we are absolutely essential to moving Marines around the battlefield, to delivering ordnance on targets, and to sustaining the fight. So once again it is that delicate tradeoff between the current fight and the future fight.

We are committed to unmanned systems. We have at least two that are programs of record here that we are working with the Department of the Navy to continue to procure. And we know that is an area that we would have to get, as the Commandant said, smarter, better, faster, cheaper in.

General WALTERS. Thank you, Representative Scott. To emphasize a couple of things the ACMC [Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps] has said, we have Class 1, 2 and 3 and we have a Class 3 program in the RQ-21. The Commandant has tasked us to go back and look at a capabilities analysis of that. And what do we want? Or what do we need?

The trick is always when you talk Class 4 and Class 5 is Class 4 is something we could probably afford if we take some risks elsewhere and we will get some benefit from that. Class 5 is kind of a UAV [unmanned aerial vehicle] that is do you need it in the Marine Corps or do you need access to it in joint? We fully support—I mean, when in Afghanistan we used MQ-9s, we used the Predators, the Reapers, everything was over my AO [area of operations].

Obviously if we are in a joint force then we need to have the joint capability available to us, but we are taking a very serious look at it and seeing what we can afford. I think the Commandant would want to propose buying as much as we could to put in the MAGTF because we are sometimes by ourselves in different places in the world. But this is I guess I could say it is a real big debate point right now, what can we afford and how quick can we get it?

Mr. SCOTT. But as long as you have it in the joint force you feel like you are——

General WALTERS. Well, that is an option, but there are scenarios where if the joint force is not available then we have to look very seriously at what capability we bring in the Marine Corps, and we need to pursue that.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you for your service.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Scott.

We will now go to Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and it is good to see you all here. We have been very, very fortunate, Mr. Chairman, that we had great leadership at Camp Pendleton in San Diego, and I was delighted to have an opportunity to work particularly with General Paxton and General Coglianesse. So thank you again for being here and for your dedication to our country.

One of the discussions that we have had over the last few weeks particularly is the Russian aggression in the Baltics. And I wondered if you could respond to the European Reassurance Initiative [ERI] and how that might be impacted by the situation of prepositioning our stocks in Norway.

How are we doing with the progress of that in shifting the focus from transportation to heavier equipment in the area? Where do you think that is and what do you need?

I guess I would also say, because I think we hear from our constituents all the time, and we know the military will do anything that we ask of them, particularly the Marines. I think a lot of people are often thinking of the Marines when they think about that and they want us to keep them safe here at home.

Often you hear some criticism, if you will, that we have too many troops in the European theater. So could you put this together so people understand how important it is?

General PAXTON. Thank you, Congresswoman Davis. I will start and then defer to General Coglianesse, who can talk a little bit actually about the prepositioning. We are keenly aware of the emergence of another potential “fight tonight” area in terms of Russian aggression through Europe. As you and the members of the committee well remember, in days of old the Marines had a mission on the northern and southern flank of the European AOR [area of responsibility].

With our Special Purpose MAGTF that works for the Africa commander, the previous AFRICOM and EUCOM [U.S. European Command] commanders were able to broker a unit and force-sharing agreement so that forces could shop relatively quickly and seamlessly back and forth between the two of them. So we have a large component of that Special Purpose MAGTF and they are titled the Black Sea Rotation Force.

So for several years now they have been doing bilateral and multilateral engagements and exercises, primarily on the southern flank and working out of two particular countries there where we have some basing and station arrangements.

That Special Purpose MAGTF still is dependent on mobility to get to where they need to go, so they need V-22s and KC-130s and things that are already in short supply for everyone else.

So we do have forces over there. We do depend on the ERI to help them out. We don’t have enough density there, and we don’t have enough mobility there.

As we speak here today, we are recovering Marines from exercise Cold Response in Norway where we work with Norwegian and United Kingdom allies to train up there. And this is really the first time since pre-9/11 that we have had a large footprint north of the Arctic Circle doing cold weather operations.

So we are slowly reestablishing environmental capability and fighting capability in those two areas.

The issue for us remains getting in, the power projection piece, and then sustaining. So we are back to the discussion we have about the adequacy and the availability of our amphibious fleet to get us to those two theaters because they are remote and you have great sea lines of communication to get there. And then we are dependent on maritime prepositioning or cave prepositioning for supplies.

As you know, Congresswoman, we got rid of one of the MPSRONS [maritime prepositioning ship squadrons]. It was largely a fiscally driven decision several years ago. But we only have two maritime prepositioning squadrons now, both in the Pacific AOR. We would like to have that one back in Europe. That would be a big boon. In the absence of that we continue to use the caves in Norway. And I will let General Coglianesse talk about what those caves mean to us and what is and is not there, ma’am.

General COGLIANESE. Yes, ma’am. Thank you for the question. As you know, that MPSRON squadron was in the Mediterranean, too, so it was located in the European area. There is a lot of emphasis on the caves right now, our prepositioning. We have recently

put more things in it, surrounded it. It is basically a battalion landing team mechanized with a command element, assets and some logistics assets and some aviation assets or for ground aviation logistics.

There are tanks, AAVs [Amphibious Assault Vehicles], and, you know, the Norwegians are very good partners and it has been a great relationship since 1986 when we started the program. But it is the emphasis on that program, I think, has been spotlighted and it has increased in recent times with the tension in Europe.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Thank you.

General COGLIANESE. I can go on to tell you more about what is in there, but like you say, right now the exercise that is going right now has been very successful in drawing that equipment out. And once again we will reconstitute it, put it back in with our partners in Norwegian and use it for future exercises.

Mrs. DAVIS. Okay. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mrs. Davis. Appreciate it.

Mr. Nugent.

Mr. NUGENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank the generals for being here today. Really do appreciate everything that you do.

You know, I am concerned when you start hearing about the dwell time. You know, the Marine Corps really had their act together, I think, in regards to dwell time versus, you know, I have got three sons in the Army, you know, 15 months in Afghanistan isn't exactly the best outcome.

And so I start to worry when you hear dwell times slipping, particularly when the Marine Corps, I believe, did a great job. And, you know, it really does help, you know, that your troops but also their families that are, you know, left behind to have to make it.

At what point, you know, we cut the Marine Corps end strength, at what point do we get to where we—I know we will fight if we have to, but at some point in time I think we have to start making decisions about where we fight because what we don't want to do is break the Marine Corps or the Army for that matter.

So is there a breaking point that we, hopefully, have not come close to? But is there such a thing as a breaking point?

General PAXTON. So thank you, Congressman Nugent. I am sure there is a breaking point. We don't always know where it is. We try to predict it. We try to predict the breaking point by readiness or by risk or by fiscal or by people. What we always are mindful of is we don't want to find that breaking point in the rearview mirror and realize that we actually culminated some time ago and we can't do what we do.

To your question, sir, as I said in my opening statement, we are going to be ready with every unit tonight. And we are going to be ready with the next one that comes. So when the military plans, I believe, sir, that they plan against the most dangerous enemy course of action as opposed to the most likely enemy course of action.

So when the geographic combatant commanders come before the committee and they say here is what could happen in my AOR, those risks that any of those six geographic combatant commanders

pose then become risks that are transferred institutionally to the four services. And then we worry about not that we can fight, but can we do a two at one? Can we do a delay and a deny? Can we do a win and a deny?

And more importantly in today's world where adversaries have increasing capability and more command and control and they are developing better generation aircraft and a deeper bench for shipping, the issue is can they project their power and will faster than we can respond?

So our concern is not the quality of the soldier, sailor, airman, Marine and what we are going to do. It is can we get enough of them to the point where we are at risk—

Mr. NUGENT. Do you have capacity?

General PAXTON. So that is exactly it, sir.

Mr. NUGENT. It's the same issue. It is about capacity. You know, the will and readiness, you know, the will to fight I don't question any Marine's will to fight or any soldier's will to fight.

But, you know, in the Army at one point in time, you know, I think they were staffed up to 110 percent so if they fielded they would be with, you know, 100 percent personnel ready to go.

And they are struggling right now between, you know, folks that for whatever reason, you know, medical, which is a big one. How is the Marine Corps doing in regards to, you know, your strength of your units? I am not talking about the ones deployed necessarily, but, you know, the ones in reserve?

General PAXTON. So our manpower situation, sir, is good right now. Our recruiting is good. Our retention is good. Our schooling is good and the availability of the individual Marine and consequently the availability of the unit is good overall.

The issue, as General Walters alluded to earlier, is the timing about getting the right number of the right grade, the right MOS [military occupational specialty], the right skill set to the right unit in time that they can do training to work up. And this is what happens when we go from a 1:3 to a 1:2.

So when you make that big jump what you sacrifice is that you are going to be ready just in time and you are going to be ready just for the assigned mission.

You don't have the latitude or the luxury to plan for other missions that could pop up and you don't have the latitude to take a little bit longer and delay your deployment. So everything is a little bit of self-induced crisis.

General WALTERS. No, sir. It is the dep-to-dwell and the end strength and how much you use it. On a daily basis we use up our readiness. The only real lever we can provide is time to train. All the metrics we see on the quality of our people, the money we put into those programs seems to be working.

It is what does the country want us to do? If the country wants us to do more than we are doing now, then we could report to you that we might be closer to that breaking point.

I think our dep-to-dwell now is about at as high an operational tempo as we can stand. We have seen this in the past in the war in Afghanistan and Iraq. We saw the crisis in certain MOSs. And when we built the force back up we targeted certain battalions, Cobra squadrons, 53 squadrons, and we targeted those just because

that is what we could build, not because that was the only demand signal. But that is what we could accomplish.

Mr. NUGENT. Thank you.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Nugent. Appreciate that.

Mr. Courtney.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bells are ringing—

Mr. WITTMAN. Yes.

Mr. COURTNEY [continuing]. So I will be real quick and thank you for your testimony. I think it is important to not let go unnoticed this morning on page 13 of your testimony, the Marines, again, are the first service to hit initial operating capability for the F-35, which is really I think a new sort of milestone in, you know, in aviation history, not just for this country but for the world. So again, congratulations to your team for doing that.

Can you talk a little bit about, you know, the plan which is to actually, you know, send a squadron out to Japan in 2017? And what does that mean, I mean, in terms of, you know, what are they going to do and what is it replacing? And because obviously I think this is quite significant, and again, you deserve a lot of credit.

General PAXTON. Thank you, Congressman Courtney, and again, mindful of the time here so we will go quick. The F-35 did meet IOC last summer. We have a squadron that is full up in Yuma right now and we are still on timeline to move that squadron to Iwakuni. The F-35 represents to us not only the V/STOL [vertical/short take-off and landing] capability that we need to project power, assure from ship-to-shore in an expeditionary operation, but it is also a fifth generation aircraft which means it has enhanced navigation, communications, and particularly EW [electronic warfare] and cyber capability.

So the intent on moving it to Iwakuni, where we are grateful for the support for the facilities out there, is that we can actually move from IOC to FOC [full operational capability] and test it in an operational environment, sometimes working with other dissimilar aircraft whether it is U.S. or allies and actually see how good and how well we have designed and prepared the aircraft.

As is always the case, if you put aircraft in the hands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines they will help you figure out whether you did the designing and the production right or whether it has capabilities you didn't anticipate you could do.

And General Walters.

General WALTERS. No, sir, and it is going to the Pacific, and if you look at what the Navy is doing with their carrier laydown, the fifth generation carrier, first fifth generation carrier for the Navy, is going to be on the West Coast. That has caused us to change our plans and follow the carrier out to the West Coast. So we are going to have to find some money to put the capability out there in Miramar.

Mr. COURTNEY. Thank you.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Courtney, and we appreciate that. We have votes, about 6 minutes left in the votes, so it won't allow us to be able to get there and get back in time. Mr. Gallego didn't have a chance to have his question asked, but I will make sure we take his questions, get them entered for the record.

And gentlemen, thank you so much. Thanks for the great job that you do on behalf of our Nation and thanks for the great job your Marines do for our Nation. We deeply appreciate all of your valuable information you provided for us today to make sure we give the proper direction in this year's NDAA to provide for the resources for the Marine Corps to continue on the path to restore readiness.

So folks, thanks again, and we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MARCH 3, 2016

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 3, 2016

Statement of the Honorable Robert J. Wittman
Chairman, Readiness Subcommittee
"The Marine Corps 2017 Operations and Maintenance Budget Request and
Readiness Posture"
March 3, 2016

Good morning. Thank you all for being here today for our Readiness subcommittee hearing on the Marine Corps' 2017 Operations and Maintenance Budget Request and Readiness Posture. This is the third of four hearings on the services' budget requests and readiness postures. Recently the Marine Corps Commandant, General Bob Neller spoke at the Atlantic Council and said, "As a force in readiness, it's critical to our identity that we are ready". Today, I look forward to hearing how the Marine Corps' budget request enables a readiness recovery plan and where we continue to take risks; calculated in terms of both risk to the force and risk to the mission.

I would like to welcome all of our members and the distinguished panel of senior Marine Corps leaders present today.

This morning we have with us:

- General John M. Paxton, Jr., USMC
Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps
- Lieutenant General Glenn M. Walters, USMC
Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources, U.S. Marine Corps
- Major General Vincent A. Coglianese, USMC
Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics (Plans), U.S. Marine Corps

Thank you all for testifying today and we look forward to your thoughts and insights on these important issues.

The purpose of this hearing is to clarify the Marine Corps' choices for its budget requests, to address funding priorities and mitigation strategies, and to gather more detail on the current and future impacts of these decisions on operations, maintenance, training, and modernization. Most importantly, does the Marine Corps have the resources it requires in order to improve its state of readiness? This morning we want to get at the heart of the responsibility the Congress has placed on the Marine Corps and that is to serve as our nation's force in readiness, and as General Neller has appropriately interpreted, he says "this means that our bags are always packed, Marines are ready to go and our gear is prepared, and we have to be able to fight when we get where we're going."

Once again, I want to thank our witnesses for participating in our hearing this morning and I look forward to discussing these important topics.

**CONGRESSWOMAN MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO
READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON
THE MARINE CORPS
FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST AND READINESS
STATEMENT AND QUESTIONS
MARCH 3, 2016**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman for calling this hearing today. General Paxton, General Walters, and General Coglianesse, thank you, gentlemen, for your service and leadership, and for being here today.

The Marine Corps is now the third service we have had testify before our subcommittee this year to examine the F-Y-17 budget request. We have heard several common themes echoed by commanders in your sister services, and I will be interested to hear if they ring true from your perspectives as well. Budget constraints and continued funding unpredictability resulting from years of sequestration and continuing resolutions have hampered the ability of the services to man, train, and equip the forces they need to fill critical mission requirements. We have also heard how deployment to dwell ratios have been compromised, requiring service members to spend more time away from home and their families, while also degrading readiness faster than it can be built. Additionally, installation readiness has also been compromised, and long-term projects have been shelved in favor of more pressing needs. This has secondary and tertiary impacts, and will create more significant funding requirements for military construction in years to come.

As the military's primary rapid response ground force, however, the Marine Corps also faces unique challenges. You mention in your testimony that a focus on responsive readiness capacity has degraded the readiness of non-deployed and critical support units. Ensuring that you have a ready and capable bench is critical to our forward capabilities. Additionally, despite tight budget constraints, I look forward to hearing about your commitment to ensuring that critical military construction projects, such as those on Guam, continue as scheduled.

Through our discussion today I hope we can gain a better understanding of how the Marine Corps plans to maintain readiness through personnel, training, and infrastructure improvement. Thank you again for your service, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

STATEMENT
OF
GENERAL JOHN PAXTON
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS
BEFORE THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
ON
MARINE CORPS 2017 BUDGET REQUEST AND READINESS
3 MARCH 2016
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
ROOM 2118

Introduction

Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Bordallo, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness: I appreciate the opportunity to testify on the current state of readiness in your Marine Corps and on our Fiscal Year 2017 budget request. We greatly appreciate the continued support of Congress and of this subcommittee in ensuring our ability to remain the nation's ready force.

The Marine Corps has been our nation's crisis response force since our first landing in the Bahamas, on this very date in March 1776. Two hundred and forty years ago today the Marines led by our first Commandant, Captain Samuel Nichols, seized weapons and gunpowder for George Washington's Continental Army. Since that day the Marine Corps has been dedicated to being our country's expeditionary force in readiness, chartered by the 82nd Congress to be the most ready force when the nation is least ready. I thank this Committee and the 114th Congress for their appreciation of that vital role, which you reaffirmed in the most recent National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Your Marine Corps Today

2015 was a demanding year, much like any other for your Marine Corps. Our expeditionary forces continue to be in demand and heavily employed in the face of an increasingly challenging global environment. Your Marines executed approximately 100 operations, 20 of them amphibious, 140 security cooperation activities with our partners and allies, and 160 major exercises. In partnership with the State Department, we employed Marines at 174 embassies and consulates in 146 countries, with many posts permanently increased in size to contend with increased threats. Our Marine Security Augmentation Units (MSAUs) deployed 33 times from the United States for short-term reinforcement of posts under particular threat. We remain grateful for your support of our 61 year old mission sets in support of the Department of State as demonstrated by your 2013 NDAA.

Our 22,500 Marines west of the International Date Line continued to play an important role in maintaining stability in East Asia, working closely with America's treaty allies from Japan and the Republic of Korea in the north to Darwin, Australia in the south and numerous other allies, partners, and locations in between. III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) once again

demonstrated why they are the force of choice for crisis response in Pacific Command. Marines from III MEF based in Okinawa and mainland Japan moved directly from a training exercise in the Philippines into a disaster response mission in Nepal. Once there they evacuated 69 casualties, flew 376 sorties totaling 1300 hours in high mountains, and provided 1070 tons of emergency relief supplies. Six Marines gave their lives in support of that relief operation. The Bonhomme Richard Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), one of the seven MEUs that operate at sea in support of all Combatant Commanders, also provided humanitarian assistance after a typhoon struck the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The ARG/MEUs in the Middle East supported our embassy in Yemen, enabled United States special operations forces, and conducted other training missions.

Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC or COCOM) operational requirements also continue to be quickly and capably met by land-based Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTFs). The unit assigned to Africa Command supported the reopening of our embassy in the Central African Republic, provided security at an operating location in Cameroon, conducted high risk site surveys for numerous diplomatic posts, and provided incident response forces from multiple locations. We added a new combined arms capability to the Black Sea Rotational Force (BSRF), supporting our nation's commitment to security and stability in Eastern Europe. In Southern Command, a tailored unit assisted with the reconstruction of a runway in Honduras and conducted security cooperation in three other countries. Finally, in Central Command (CENTCOM) our SPMAGTF complemented our MEUs and Special Operations Force efforts across the region by reinforcing our embassy in Baghdad. They also reinforced and in February and March assisted with the evacuation of our diplomatic facilities in Yemen. Additionally they conducted training in Jordan, and contributed security forces, quick reaction forces, train, advise, and assist teams, tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) support, and other capabilities to Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR).

Seven hundred and fifty Marines established and are still operating training sites at Al Asad and Al Taqaddam Air Bases in Iraq. From there they have been training and enabling the progress of Iraqi forces as they combat ISIS, including their recent support to a successful Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) counterattack at Ramadi. Marine aviation, working from the land base and the sea base, flew over 1,275 sorties in the CENTCOM theater, conducting 325 kinetic strikes

and providing personnel recovery assets for that air campaign. In Afghanistan, more than 100 Marines continue to operate with the ISAF staff and as enablers for forces from the Republic of Georgia. While our large-scale commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan have diminished, today many Marines still remain in harm's way, heavily engaged in the Middle East and around the globe to do our nation's bidding.

Your Marine Corps from Today into the Future

As we continue to organize for, train for, and execute our missions, we are concentrating our near term efforts in five interrelated areas that are vital to the Marine Corps' future success. Our Commandant, General Robert Neller, has directed that we focus on five key areas: People, Readiness, Training, Naval Integration, and Modernization. The three major themes that run throughout his guidance are maintaining and improving the high quality people who make up today's Marine Corps; decentralizing training and preparation for war while adhering to Maneuver Warfare principles in the conduct of training and operations; and modernizing the force, especially through leveraging new and evolving technologies.

Readiness, our focus here today, cannot be considered in isolation from the other areas, which in turn help comprise the five historic pillars that are the foundation of our institutional readiness and responsiveness. First, unit readiness is our most immediate concern. We must guarantee our ability to execute the mission when called. Second, we must have the ability to deploy, aggregate, and command and control our expeditionary capabilities to meet the combatant commanders' requirements. The third, strongest, and most vital pillar of our readiness remains our Marines, the product of a time tested transformation process at our Recruit Training Depots. Fourth, those Marines and units rely on our infrastructure sustainment: our bases, stations, and installations are our launch and recovery platforms and must remain up to that key task. Fifth and finally, we must continuously push forward with equipment modernization, balancing our current and future warfighting needs.

These five pillars represent the operational and foundational components of readiness across the Marine Corps. We know we are ready when our leaders confirm that their units are well trained, well led at all levels, properly equipped, and can respond quickly to the unforeseen. Our nation's leaders may call on us for that response today, next week or next year, but we must be

ready in any case. In the current fiscal environment we have been struggling to maintain that balance between current readiness and projected future readiness. Our 5.6% reduction in Operations and Maintenance funding from FY2015 to FY2016 makes that near term struggle even more difficult.

While we remain grateful for the balanced budget agreement (BBA) and overseas contingency operations (OCO) dollars, we also continue to need a stable and predictable fiscal planning horizon. As I stated last year the possibility of Budget Control Act (BCA) implementation continues to loom over us all. It threatens our planning and readiness. While all of our deployed forces have met or exceeded our readiness standards for their assigned missions, as resources have already flat-lined or diminished, it has been at the expense of our non-deployed forces, and investments in other areas such as sustainment and modernization. As the Commandant stated earlier this week, today the Marine Corps is no longer in a position to generate current readiness and reset our equipment while sustaining our facilities and modernizing to ensure our future readiness. In order to stay ready and to “fight tonight” under current budgetary outlays and constraints, we are continuing to mortgage our future readiness.

Unit Readiness

We will ensure that an aviation squadron embarks on amphibious warships for a MEU deployment or on a Unit Deployment Program (UDP) rotation to an expeditionary base in the Pacific with its full complement of trained personnel and ready aircraft. They must also have a complete block of vital spare parts, which have taken on even greater importance as we work to reset aircraft fleets flown hard over fourteen years of conflict. In doing so that squadron may leave its sister squadrons deficient in ready aircraft and parts as they attempt to train for their own upcoming deployments. Those deficiencies then cut into the number of Ready Basic Aircraft (RBA) available to train. This in turn reduces flying hours for the squadron’s pilots, making it more difficult for them to maintain or achieve their own necessary qualifications (eg. overall hours, flight leadership qualifications, night flying proficiency, shipboard landing qualifications). The same dynamic is true in other forms for some of our other units – the communications and engineering battalions that send their best equipment and operators out to support our MEUs and SPMAGTFs may lack the assets to support elements remaining at home

station, inhibiting their ability to train for future deployments and be ready to execute OPLANs or support crisis response.

That same flying squadron struggling to prepare for its next deployment, that communications or engineering battalion with key personnel and equipment already forward, are all a part of our “bench” - our ready force for any crisis or contingency that exceeds our forward deployed capacity. Some enabling units, primarily those located in our Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) headquarters formations that provide functions such as intelligence and communications, are deploying elements in support of sustained missions that were not anticipated by past planning assumptions. The absence of those elements, and the need to reset those elements following their deployments, degrades the readiness of the parent unit at home station. If the MEF were required to respond to a major crisis, they would require augmentation of personnel and equipment to alleviate those shortfalls. In order to retain our home station crisis response capability as well as our surge capabilities for operational plans (OPLANs), our rotational units must be able to quickly regain and sustain their own readiness following brief post-deployment degradations as old personnel depart, new personnel report, and equipment is reset. Under our current resource levels we are accepting prolonged readiness risks and focusing the training of some units to their more limited rotational mission sets vice full spectrum operations.

When our resources fail to keep pace with operational requirements it further exacerbates these readiness problems. In the event of a crisis, these degraded units could either be called upon to deploy immediately at increased risk to the force and the mission, or require additional time to prepare thus incurring increased risk to mission by surrendering the initiative to our adversaries. By degrading the readiness of these bench forces to support those forward deployed, we are forced to accept increased risk in our ability to respond to further contingencies, our ability to assure we are the most ready when the nation is least ready. This does not mean we will not be able to respond to the call of the nation’s leadership. It does mean that executing our defense strategy or responding to an emergent crisis may require more time, more risk, and incur greater costs and casualties.

Demand and Capacity to Respond

After a deliberate Marine Corps Quadrennial Defense Review study in 2014, the study identified 186,800 as the optimal force size to address the forecast demands foreseen at that time. World events continue to challenge the assumptions behind that forecast, both in terms of the world situation and capability requirements such as cyber and special operations, and we are reassessing our projected future requirements. As shown by our operations in 2015, your Marine Corps continues to be in high demand from our regional COCOMs. With our stabilization at an end strength of 182,000 we will continue to satisfy many but not all of those demands. That demand signal has not substantially abated due to the emergence of threats in new forms, gradually increasing the strain on our forces.

Along with adequate resourcing, our forces require time to conduct training and maintain their equipment between deployments. We use the term “deployment to dwell” (D2D) to capture the ratio of time Marines and units spend deployed as opposed to resetting for their subsequent deployment. Our ideal D2D ratio is 1:3, which means a deployment of 7 months is followed by 21 months of time at home station. That home station time is required for the unit to conduct personnel turnover, equipment reset and maintenance, and complete a comprehensive individual, collective, and unit training program across all their mission essential tasks (METs) prior to deploying again. Today this timeline is challenged by the increased maintenance requirements of aging equipment, shortages in the availability of ships with which to conduct amphibious training, ensuring personnel fills are in place, and other factors to include school seats, training range availability and even weather.

Those challenges are compounded by the demands on today’s force, which have many of our units and capabilities deploying with a 1:2 D2D ratio, which translates to one third less home station training time than we would prefer. In several fields, we are currently operating in excess of a 1:2 ratio for entire units or individuals with critical skills. For example, our infantry regimental headquarters elements are currently providing command and control for our SPMAGTFs in Africa and Central Command, which is limiting their ability to train to other core METs in major conventional operations. While we may be able to develop internal solutions to partially mitigate that concern, there are other challenges that belie simple solutions. Whereas a few years ago we were focused on our explosive ordnance disposal, engineering, and unmanned aerial vehicle units, today our critical ground force concerns are for our communications,

intelligence, and signals intelligence battalions. All of our intelligence and communications battalions and one of our signals intelligence battalions would be unable to execute their full wartime mission requirements if called upon today. While other supporting enablers have scaled down their deployments as the overall size of our deployed units decreased, those three areas in particular are facing similar requirements as in the past in support of our forward deployed crisis response forces, along with increased demands for “reach back” support that further inhibits their abilities to train and reset while at home station. Those units require specialized equipment and highly skilled, highly trained individuals, making them difficult to quickly scale up.

Our aviation community also has elements being stressed by a tempo in excess of a 1:2 D2D ratio including all of our fixed wing and tiltrotor aircraft, while our attack helicopters are being recapitalized and heavy lift helicopters reset as they cope with shortfalls in ready basic aircraft (RBA). Approximately 80% of our aviation units lack the minimum number of RBA for training, and we are also short ready aircraft for potential wartime requirements. We are working hard with the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV), the Department of the Navy, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to find solutions to the RBA issue. Our tactical fighter and attack squadrons (TACAIR), F/A-18 A-D Hornets and AV-8B Harriers, are suffering from shortages in aircraft availability due to increased wear on aging aircraft and modernization delays. The average age of our TACAIR fleet is over 22 years, over two times the average age of the corresponding Navy TACAIR fleet. The impact of reduced funding levels on our depot throughput and the 2013 furloughs of highly skilled artisans resonates today and will continue to resonate into the future. We have increased depot throughput by 44% in FY2015 compared to 2014, returning to pre-sequestration levels. We anticipate continuing to increase depot productivity, but will not fully recover our F/A-18 A-D model backlog before 2019. We have temporarily reduced the aircraft requirement for our F-18 squadrons from 12 to 10 to allow home station squadrons greater training opportunities. For the same reasons, we have temporarily reduced our CH-53E squadrons from 16 to 12 aircraft and Harrier squadrons from 16 to 14. We are essentially increasing risk in one area (forward today in support of COCOMs) to mitigate risk in another (allow home station training for future readiness).

Our tiltrotor MV-22 Ospreys, deployed in conjunction with KC-130J aerial refueling aircraft, have provided previously unthinkable reach and flexibility to our combatant commanders.

Deployment demands have also brought both communities to D2D ratios in excess of 1:2, which is unsustainable in the long term. This is compounded as we continue to field both aircraft. In our Global Force Management allocation proposal for fiscal year 2017, we will reduce the number of those aircraft assigned to two SPMAGTFs in order to move these communities closer to a sustainable path. Our combatant commanders can mitigate this reduction to some degree with judicious use of similar assets from our MEUs when available, but there will be a loss in capacity forward. As we continue to contend with constant or increasing demand, every reduction in resources will force further difficult decisions by COCOMs and sourcing MEF alike.

Personnel

The success of our Marine Corps, the center of our readiness, and our ability to respond to the requests of the combatant commanders and demands of our nation's leaders rests on the high quality, character, and capabilities of our individual Marines. Those Marines are the product of a time-tested yet continuously assessed process of recruiting, transformation at our Recruit Depots, and subsequent military occupational specialty training that provides our units with the trained Marines they need to prepare for their collective missions. Since the establishment of the All-Volunteer Force over 40 years ago through the millennial generation of today, we have successfully recruited and retained the high caliber American men and women we need to operate effectively on today's battlefields. The steadily increasing quality of our recruits is testimony to the solid foundation of our recruiting system. The continual success of our tactical units on the battlefield over the past 14 years validates our transformation and training processes.

Despite our continued successes, we cannot take future success in these areas for granted and must continue to seek ways to maintain and improve the high quality people who make up today's Marine Corps. Some of our most stressed career fields with the longest training timelines, including aviators, intelligence, communications, and cyber personnel are also potentially in high demand in the civilian sector. We most closely track our ability to retain our highly qualified Marines in these areas. Our drawdown from the congressionally approved temporary increase in end strength to 202,000 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF) to our current force of 184,000 resulted in increased competition for retention, but that drawdown will reach its conclusion at 182,000 Marines this year. We are now

re-emphasizing and re-energizing our leadership's attention on retention to ensure that we continue to retain the requisite numbers of the very best Marines capable of fulfilling our leadership and operational needs.

We also continue to be challenged to ensure we have the correct small unit leaders with the right grade, experience, technical skills, and leadership qualifications associated with their billets. As I stated last year, our inventory and assignment policies of Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs) has not been meeting our force structure requirements. Our efforts to correctly draw down end-strength have included right-sizing our NCO ranks to provide our Marines the small unit leadership they deserve and which our Corps needs. Concurrent with that right-sizing, we have implemented a Squad Leader Development Program (SLDP) in the infantry, our largest occupational field, to continue to improve the tactical proficiency, the technical skills, and the leadership qualifications of those NCOs. We are studying ways to broaden that program into other career fields, including a deliberate effort to identify and map all of our critical enlisted leader billets. We have also identified approximately 500 non-structured billets for elimination, allowing us to return some experienced Marines to assignments where their leadership will have a greater impact. We will execute these programs in tandem with our continuing efforts to improve the personnel stability and cohesion in our non-deployed units, which our current operating tempo renders difficult. Our goal continues to be ensuring that all units have the right personnel, leadership, and cohesion in place at the right time to conduct the collective and unit training they need to succeed in the face of any mission and to overcome any challenge.

We are also monitoring the implementation of two significant personnel reforms for still undetermined impacts and potential challenges to our personnel readiness. We are already moving ahead with the Secretary of Defense's order of 3 Dec 2015 to implement full integration of all qualified Marines, regardless of gender, into all military occupational specialties (MOSs) and units. Over the past three years we have dedicated significant resources to preparing for the implementation of this order, including our Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force (GCE-ITF) research, training female volunteers at the entry level military occupational specialty (MOS) producing schools for the now open fields, and opening other previously restricted MOSs and units. These lines of effort (LOEs) have provided us with the data we needed to codify

operationally relevant, occupationally specific standards that were previously informal, unclear, or outdated. This will help improve the overall readiness of all of our forces going forward. We have already awarded the appropriate Additional MOSs (AMOS) to all of the exceptional volunteers from our research efforts, and encouraged them to consider applying to move into those combat arms fields as their primary MOS (PMOS). We currently have female officers training in the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course for service in that community, and our Recruiting Command is contacting all of the women in our Delayed Entry Program pool to inform them of their expanded opportunities. As we move forward with our Marine Corps Integration Implementation Plan (MCHIP), we will closely monitor the process and progress to determine the impact on first, our combat effectiveness; second, on the health and welfare of our individual Marines; and third, on our ability to manage and best utilize the talents of all the Marines in our force. These are the three lenses through which we have assessed all of our efforts and recommendations over the past 2-3 years. I continue to have concerns in all three areas, but am confident that our assessment and subsequent adjustments during implementation will help us find the best way forward for our Marines, the Marine Corps, and the nation as we execute these changes.

The Department of Defense is also in the midst of implementing, preparing for, or studying multiple other personnel reforms that may have significant but as yet undetermined impacts on our ability to afford, recruit, and retain the highest quality force. Many of these are outlined in the Force of the Future Initiative (FotFI). The Department's FotFI touches on nearly all aspects of military and civilian personnel systems. In many cases the changes driven by this initiative are welcome, often codifying what has been existing service practices. In select other cases we continue to advocate for service flexibility from any overly prescriptive policies or targets which may dilute the authorities and flexibility the Service Chiefs need to execute their Title 10 responsibilities and in particular reduce our availability of ready and trained personnel. We are preparing to educate our current force on the retirement program changes enacted into law by Congress last year and assess the long term consequences of those changes both fiscally and on our personnel. Ideally those changes will be part of a wider program of reforms including compensation, healthcare, and retirement which collectively ensure we have an adequate, comprehensive, and attractive plan for our force. Finally, the Goldwater-Nichols examination being undertaken by the Congress and the Department includes a look at our joint training,

education, assignment, and availability of our mid-grade and senior officers. We must make haste slowly in all these areas to ensure that our attempts to continually improve upon our current, although sometimes imperfect system do not disrupt a system that has in fact been exceptionally successful since 1986 at improving jointness, integration, and warfighting capability including over fourteen years of continuous combat.

Infrastructure Sustainment

Our installations and infrastructure are the platforms upon which and from which our Marines and units live, train, launch, and recover. They are the platforms that generate our readiness. The Marine Corps' installations provide the capability and capacity we need to support the force. This includes our two depot maintenance facilities, which provide responsive and scalable depot maintenance support. Both depot sites, which were right-sized in 2014, have been vital to our ongoing equipment reset activities based on our past force and equipment reductions in Iraq and Afghanistan. To date the Marine Corps has reset 78% of its ground equipment with 50% returned to our operating forces. We anticipate the depot sites will continue to play vital roles for the Marine Corps even after our expected completion of our current reset efforts in 2019. As we are resetting, we are also conducting a Corps-wide equipment review to right-size and reposition our equipment sets for today's environment as well as future challenges. This includes careful examination of items, such as critical communications equipment, that are having the most significant impacts on our readiness. We have already identified several critical items and components and have requests to address them in our FY2017 budget.

The Marine Corps has infrastructure and facilities worldwide that train, house, and provide quality of life for our Marines and their families. These facilities must be appropriately maintained to prevent degradation of their ability to support our force and its readiness. We are executing our Facility Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM) initiative, the single most important investment in facilities readiness to support training, operations, and quality of life. We are accepting risk by programming at 74% of the funding level based on the Office of the Secretary of Defense Facilities Sustainment Model. We are focused on meeting the essential habitability, safety, and quality of life requirements while deferring all other activities, to include the demolition of outdated facilities that are no longer needed but continue to incur safety driven maintenance costs. Our FY2017 military construction (MILCON) funding proposal decreases by

\$330 million from FY2016 enacted levels. This FY2017 program enables continued progress towards our long term re-alignment in the Pacific, including projects necessary to introducing vital new warfighting capabilities into the region such as the F-35B. We will require future construction funding increases as some of these projects mature, such as on Guam, and to activate additional combat staging locations (CSLs) from which to support forward deployed forces. In addition to these future requirements, the reductions to military construction of the past two years and continuing shortfalls in sustainment funding put us at risk of reversing hard-earned gains in our infrastructure status (with thanks to Congress for their support of our MILCON for the past 5-10 years) as our new construction most likely ages prematurely for lack of maintenance. Left unchecked, this degradation of our infrastructure can be expected to have negative long-term impacts not only on quality of life, but also on our support to training, operations, logistics, and ultimately readiness.

Modernization

We are continuing to press modernization in the most essential areas to ensure the Marine Corps remains ready and relevant in the face of more capable future enemies. We must balance the cost of those efforts against our current readiness. Our first operational Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Squadron, VMFA 121, declared its initial operating capability (IOC) in 2015, equipped with state of the art technology in our F-35Bs. After the second squadron becomes operational in 2016, VMFA 121 will relocate to Iwakuni, Japan in FY2017. From there they will operate with the US Air Force and our regional allies ashore and at sea with our Navy partners. While we are still working to achieve the full operating capabilities (FOC) of these aircraft, even at their IOC status our F-35B squadrons are prepared to conduct combat missions and are much more capable than the 3rd and 4th generation aircraft they are replacing. The F-35B will have a transformational impact on Marine Corps doctrine, providing 5th generation capabilities to support sea control operations (SCO) with the Navy and enable joint forcible entry operations (JFEO) by the MAGTF even in the most contested environments. We look forward to the stand-up of our first F-35C squadron, which will further enhance the capabilities of our Navy-Marine Corps team and our tactical aviation integration (TAI) plan.

Our other major aviation modernization program is the CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement, which will be critical to maintaining the battlefield mobility of our force, with nearly triple the

lift ability of the aircraft it is replacing. We anticipate our first detachment achieving IOC in FY2019 and the full 200 aircraft delivery being complete by 2029. It will be complemented within our Ground Combat Tactical Vehicle Strategy (GCTVS) by the fielding of 5,500 Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTV) with IOC in FY2019 and FOC by FY2022. We will bridge the sea and land with the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV) 1.1, using this year to test sixteen each of two down selected models against each other to ensure we receive the best possible capability even as we look forward to developing the requirements for ACV 1.2. The development of ACV 1.2 is essential to the nationally unique ship to shore power projection capability that your Marine Corps provides. We are also continuing with numerous other fiscally smaller programs that are no less vital to our warfighting capability such as the Ground/Air Task Oriented Radar (G/ATOR) and command and control systems such as Networking on the Move (NotM). Programs such as these will help us continue to improve our battlefield awareness and the dissemination of information to small and dispersed tactical units to maximize their effectiveness. Given evolving cyber threats, we also assess an as yet unidentified requirement to properly encrypt all these command and control systems, be they radio, radar, airborne, or ground mobile.

We are balancing the cost of our modernization efforts in those essential areas against our current readiness by extending and refreshing some of our legacy systems. Even as we look to modernize by replacing the F/A-18, AV-8B, and CH-53E with the F-35B/C and CH-53K, we are also working to refresh our current aircraft fleets to recover and maintain readiness and capability during the transitions. We have already completed independent readiness reviews (IRR) of our AV-8B Harrier and CH-53E Sea Stallion fleets, are in the midst a review of our MV-22 Osprey fleet, and will next examine our AH-1Z Cobra/UH-1Y Huey squadrons and aircraft to ensure we restore and maximize the potential readiness of our entire aviation community. With our ground equipment, we are in the midst of a survivability upgrade (SU) to our existing Assault Amphibian Vehicles (AAVs) to maintain essential ship to shore power projection capability and capacity while we work to get the ACV right and fielded. We are accepting much greater risk with our Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) now with an average age of 33 years, M1A1 tanks with an average age of 26 years, and other critical warfighting assets at this time. While we judge these risks to be at acceptable levels today, they are yet more examples of the trade-offs we are required to make due to fiscal reductions that accompany

operational demand increases. As we have stated before, there remains the potential for unacceptable increases in risk associated with any additional resource reductions or erroneous assumptions, operational or fiscal.

Naval and Joint Force Integration

Amphibious warships and their embarked MAGTFs are the center pieces of the Navy and Marine Corps' time tested and proven forward presence, forcible-entry, and sea-basing capabilities in support of assurance, deterrence, and contingency operations. Although our Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (SPMAGTFs) have been making essential contributions to our COCOMs, their operations have been shore based due to the inadequate size of our amphibious fleet. This represents a compromise of our preferred amphibious basing, with its sovereign launch and recovery status, and of our rich heritage and strong partnership with the United States Navy. Although the SPMAGTFs have been sought after and very successful they are not always the optimal method of employment of our forces. They may require greater resource capacity to produce the same warfighting and power projection capabilities as we achieve operating from the sea.

The availability of amphibious shipping remains paramount to readiness and responsiveness. The nation's amphibious warship requirement remains at a minimum of 38 ships to support a two Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) assault echelon (AE). As the Commandant and Chief of Naval Operations have testified in past years, the number of vessels required to meet the steady-state demands of our combatant commanders exceeds 50 vessels. The current inventory of 30 vessels falls short of the requirement by both measures, and that shortfall is aggravated by recurrent maintenance challenges in the aging amphibious fleet. The current and enduring gap of amphibious warships to requirements inhibits ours and the Navy's ability to train to our full capabilities, inhibits our shared ability to respond to an emergent crisis, and increases the strain on our current readiness.

The Marine Corps whole-heartedly supports the Navy's current build back to 34 L-Class ships by FY22, including the 12th LPD-17 class vessel this Congress has provided, the LHA-8, and the 11 ship LX(R) program based on the LPD-17 hull form. The Marine Corps would obviously prefer to reach at least the minimum requirement of 38 platforms as soon as feasible,

but we understand the Navy's difficult task in balancing amphibious readiness with many other national requirements. We agree that 34 ships, with the appropriate level of availability and surge ability, is a compromise that continues to assume an acceptable level of risk for a brief period. This risk may be seriously exacerbated if the Department of the Navy (DON) continues to be obligated to fund the Ohio Class submarine replacement from within their already pressurized total obligation authority (TOA). We also support our continued DON effort to develop and experiment with alternative platforms including the newly designated "E Class" ships. The value of the Mobile Landing Platform, now designated the Expeditionary Mobile Base (ESB), as an afloat forward staging base (AFSB) is already clear. Our combatant commanders are demanding their employment as fast as they are being fielded. The creative use of these and other existing platforms, particularly on exercises and in experiments, will enhance our capacity for operations in lower threat environments. They may provide enabling support for the operation of our amphibious warships and landing force in contested scenarios. The modernization of our ship to shore connectors (SSCs) is equally vital to this effort, including the programmed replacement of the Landing Craft Air Cushioned (LCAC) and Landing Craft Utility (LCU) platforms. Both the LCAC and LCU successor programs should provide affordable replacements for those aging craft with incremental but much needed increases in capability. These investments combined with our modernization efforts such as the fielding of the F-35B will enable a greater contribution of the Marine Corps to our overall maritime operations, particularly for forcible entry.

While retaining dominance in our traditional domains, the Navy and Marine Corps must also continue to move forward with integration into the total Joint Force as we enhance our capabilities across the entire and evolving five domain (5D) battlespace. We will begin by reinforcing our role as a naval expeditionary force that assures access for the Joint Force. While balancing our own resources, we must also ensure we remain ready to leverage and enable the capabilities of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Forces. This includes continuing to develop information warfare (IW) and command and control (C2) capabilities which are required to operate effectively against increasingly sophisticated adversaries. Our Marine Cyber Mission Teams (CMTs) and Cyber Protection Teams (CPTs) are already engaged in real world operations supporting COCOM missions and enabling the functionality of our networks in the face of persistent threats. Their expertise has been sought more than once to

conduct defensive cyber operations in support of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Joint Staff. By the end of FY2018, Marine Forces Cyber Command will have 13 Cyber Mission Force Teams with approximately 600 Marines, civilians, and contractors. As we continue to develop and assess our requirements in this area, we are challenged to balance them within our existing force structure and resourcing. We must ensure our networks are configured to provide world-wide access in garrison or forward, and are deployable, digitally interoperable, and able to support rapid advancements in technology and combat capabilities. As our adversaries and potential adversaries continue to make advances in the cyber domain, we must ensure Marine Corps Cyber Forces are ready to face and respond to those threats with cutting edge capabilities as part of US Cyber Command. This may require new policies for programmatic flexibility in manning, training, and equipping as we contend with this rapidly changing technological environment.

Concept Development and Experimentation

As we prepare to combat our foes in these new domains and focus on building our maritime based operational capability, we will continue to expand upon a robust program of experimentation embedded within our training and exercise program to push innovation and validate new ideas. While we have been focused and operationally committed to the conflicts of the past decade, our enemies and competitors have been advancing their own capabilities - technically, tactically, organizationally, and operationally. In some cases they have developed new capabilities which now equal or exceed our own. Global instability has also increased in the past few years and the threats to our national interests have evolved. We are confident that the future fight may not be what we have experienced in the past, but will involve rapidly changing and evolving technologies, which will force us to be more agile, flexible, and adaptive. We must continue to push forward and explore new warfighting and operating concepts as we must be prepared for the future fight on the distributed and lethal battlefields of 2025. We must also therefore balance our investment and commitment to experimentation against our current readiness. This creates yet another area of potential risk.

The force we need to succeed against the threats of 2025 will not be a mirror of today's Marine Corps. We expect those threats will require significant and yet unknown adjustments in manpower, training, and equipment. In order to develop the force to operate in new domains and

across the electromagnetic spectrum, we may need to either grow or to rebalance our manpower to ensure we are gaining the capability and capacity we need in new areas while continuing to improve our existing edge. That force may also require command and control, reach back, and lift capabilities that exceed our current capacities. This summer during the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise, we will conduct an experiment employing the distributed operations (DO) concept, itself developed and refined through repeated experimentation, in an anti-access area denial (A2AD) environment. We will project a lethal conventional force integrating unmanned technologies from the sea base against objectives deep ashore, then sustain that force for continuous operations. That same unit will continue to experiment with its organization throughout its scheduled FY17 deployment to the Western Pacific. The results gleaned from these and subsequent experiments will be vital as we shape the design of future force 2025 to ensure we are prepared for the next generation of threats.

Conclusion

On behalf of all of our Marines, Sailors, and their families, I thank the Congress and this subcommittee for affording us the opportunity to discuss some of the key challenges faced by our Marine Corps today and providing us the support and resources to win on the battlefield of the future as well as of today. With your continued support, we will strive to carefully and correctly balance readiness with risk in today's force and the force of tomorrow, and to articulate what we require to guarantee our warfighting capability and capacity as we improve our balance across all five pillars of readiness today and into the future. We will continue to answer the nation's call to arms, meet the needs of the Combatant Commanders and national leaders who depend on us, and be prepared to respond to any crisis or contingency that may arise. Your Marine Corps will continue to do as the 82nd and 114th Congress directed: "to be the most ready when the nation is least ready."

GENERAL JOHN M. PAXTON, JR.**Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps**

General Paxton was promoted to General and assumed the duties of Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps on December 15, 2012. A native of Pennsylvania, he graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor and Master of Science in Civil Engineering and was commissioned through Officer Candidate School in 1974.

General Paxton's assignments in the operating forces include Rifle and Weapons Platoon Commander and Company Executive Officer, Co. B, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines; Training Officer, 4th Marine Regiment; Executive Officer, Co. G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines; Company Commander, Co. L and Operations Officer, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines; GCE Operations Officer, II MEF, and Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, 1st Marine Division. He commanded the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines in support of operations in Bosnia and Somalia and later the 1st Marine Regiment.

Other assignments include Company Commander, Co. B, Marine Barracks Washington and Commanding Officer of Marine Corps Recruiting Station New York. He served as a Plans Division Officer, Plans, Policies and Operations, HQMC; the Executive Assistant to the Undersecretary of the Navy; and Amphibious Operations Officer/Crisis Action Team Executive Officer, Combined Forces Command, Republic of Korea.

As a general officer, he has served as the Director, Programs Division, Programs and Resources, HQMC; the Commanding General of Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego/Western Recruiting Region; Commanding General, 1st Marine Division; Chief of Staff, Multi-National Forces – Iraq; Director for Operations, J-3, The Joint Staff; and Commanding General, II Marine Expeditionary Force and Commander Marine Forces Africa. Most recently he served as the Commander, Marine Corps Forces Command; Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic; and Commander, Marine Forces Europe.

General Paxton is a graduate of the U.S. Army Infantry Officer Advanced Course and Marine Corps Command and Staff College. He has also served as a Commandant's Fellow at the Brookings Institute as well as at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Lieutenant General Glenn M. Walters

Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources

Lieutenant General Walters was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on 12 May 1979, after graduating from The Citadel with a degree in Electrical Engineering. Upon completion of the Officers Basic Course in November 1979, he was assigned to 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marines at Camp Lejeune as a Platoon Commander in Weapons Company. He attended flight training in Pensacola, Florida and was designated a Naval Aviator in March 1981.

After receiving his wings, Lieutenant General Walters was assigned to MAG-39 for training in the AH-1T, subsequently transferring to HMA-169 as the Flight Line Officer, Flight Scheduler and Adjutant. He completed two WESTPAC cruises in 1983 and 1984 with HMM-265.

During June 1986 Lieutenant General Walters was assigned to 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton for duty as Air Officer and Operations Officer. In July 1987 he was re-assigned to HMT-303 for refresher training in the AH-1J and subsequent transition to the AH-1W. In July 1987 he was deployed on MAGTF 1-88 in support of Operation Ernest Will in the Arabian Gulf on the USS Okinawa. After returning to the United States he was assigned as the Assistant Operations Officer and S-4 in HMLA-169.

Departing MAG-39 in September 1989, Lieutenant General Walters attended Multi-Engine Transition Training at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. He then attended the United States Naval Test Pilot School in 1990. After graduation from Test Pilot School, Lieutenant General Walters was assigned to the Attack/Assault Department of the Rotary Wing Aircraft Test Directorate at Naval Air Station, Patuxent River. His duties included Flight Test lead for the AH-1W Night Targeting System, Integrated Body and Head Restraint System and AH-1W Maverick Missile feasibility testing. He was elected to the Society of Experimental Test Pilots in October 1994.

In April 1994, after his tour in Flight Test, Lieutenant General Walters was assigned duties in the Fleet Introduction Team for the AH-1W Night Targeting System at MAG-39 in Camp Pendleton. Upon completion of Fleet Introduction of the NTS system, Lieutenant General Walters assumed the duties as Operation Officer for HMLA-369, deploying to Okinawa in November 1995. Returning from Okinawa in May 1996, Lieutenant General Walters assumed the duties as XO of HMLA-369.

Lieutenant General Walters took command of HMT-303 on 4 June 1997 and relinquished command 21 months later on 2 March 1999. He was subsequently assigned the duties of XO, Mag-39. During April 1999, Lieutenant General Walters was transferred to the Aviation Branch, Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, for service as the Head, APP-2 in the Aviation Plans and Programs Division. In March 2001 was transferred to the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology & Logistics, Defense System, Land Warfare, where he was an Aviation Staff Specialist.

Lieutenant General Walters assumed command of VMX-22 on 28 August 2003, becoming the first Commanding Officer of the Squadron. In Aug 2006 Lieutenant General Walters was assigned as head of the Aviation Requirements Branch (APW) in the Department of Aviation at HQMC. From January 2007 to April 2008, he served as head of the Plans, Policy and Budget

Branch (APP). In Mar 2008 he assumed the duties of Assistant Deputy Commandant for Aviation. After his promotion to Brigadier General in August 2008, he was assigned to the Joint Staff as Deputy Director J-8, DDRA. Lieutenant General Walters came to 2d Marine Aircraft Wing in July 2010, and assumed command of 2d Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) in November 2010. He was promoted to Major General while deployed in August 2011, and returned in March of 2012. Lieutenant General Walters assumed command of 2d Marine Aircraft Wing in May 2012 and relinquished command in May 2013. Lieutenant General Walters was promoted to his current rank on 7 June 2013 and is currently assigned as the Deputy Commandant of Programs and Resources.

Lieutenant General Walters personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (second award), Air Medal, Navy Commendation, and Navy Achievement Medal.

Installations and Logistics

Excellence in Logistics

Major General Vincent A. Coglianese

Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics (Plans)

A native of New Jersey, Major General Coglianese was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant upon graduation from Indiana University South Bend in 1983.

Major General Coglianese's assignments in the Marine Corps' operating forces include Battalion Motor Transport Officer, 2d Battalion, 12th Marines; Engineer Officer, Det. B, Marine Wing Support Group 27; Motor Transport Officer, Marine Wing Support Squadron 273; Group Motor Transport and Engineer Officer, 2nd Surveillance Reconnaissance Intelligence Group; Company Commander, Headquarters and Service Company, deployed to Southwest Asia in support of OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM; S-4, 2nd Light Armored Infantry Battalion; Operations and Executive Officer, Combat Service Support Group-3; Commander, Combat Service Support Detachment 78; Commanding Officer, MEU Service Support Group 24, deployed with the 24th MEU to Iraq's Northern Babil Province in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM; First Deputy Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command; Commanding Officer, Combat Logistics Regiment 27; Chief of Staff, 2d Marine Logistics Group (Fwd) and Commanding Officer, Combat Logistics Regiment 27 (Fwd), deployed in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM.

His other assignments include Marine Corps Representative, United States Merchant Marine Academy; Assistant Operations Officer, Joint Security Directorate, CENTCOM, deployed to Afghanistan in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM as a part of Task Force Bowie, a Joint Interagency Task Force; First Marine assigned as J-4 for Special Operations Command, Central Command, deployed in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM and served as the J-4 Directorate for Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command.

As a General Officer, he has served as the Deputy Director for Operations, J-3, The Joint Staff; Commanding General of Marine Corps Installations West - Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Commanding General, 1st Marine Logistics Group and currently, as the Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics (LP). Major General Coglianese is a graduate of the Motor Transport Officers' Course, and the U.S. Army Transportation Officers' Advance Course. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Public Environmental Affairs from Indiana, and a Master of Arts Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the Naval War College. Additionally, he attended Penn State University as the Senior Marine Fellow, Supply Chain and Information Systems Program.

Major General Coglianese was promoted to his current rank on 15 August 2014.